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ABSTRACT

This report documents the recommendations for the restructuring of the Montana University System. The report first defines the organization and governance of the system noting that control is vested solely in the Board of Regents which establishes system-wide policies and appoints the Commissioner of Higher Education. Two doctoral-level universities--the University of Montana and Montana State University--are each affiliated with two four-year institutions, with administrative functions shared by the merged institutions. The five colleges of technology in the system also are merged into the two universities; three are affiliated with the University of Montana and two with Montana State University. Two higher education centers have been established in Helena and Great Falls to maximize availability of educational opportunities. The report next documents the mission, role, and scope of the vocational-technical curriculum, the undergraduate curriculum, and the graduate curriculum, and notes the establishment of an ongoing review process. Other matters covered in the report include: dual appointments to more than one unit; fundraising, grant, and contract policies; the financial management structure; collective bargaining policies; accreditation standards; and the implementation timetable. (CH)

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ED 402 876

MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM AND POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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Helena, Montana

Units of the Montana University System

University of Montana, Missoula
Montana State University, Bozeman
Eastern Montana College, Billings
Northern Montana College, Havre
Western Montana College, Dillon
Montana College of Mineral Science & Technology, Butte

THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

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2500 Broadway
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Approved by the
Montana Board of Regents
of Higher Education

January 21, 1994

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THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

The Montana University System is a single, unified organization comprised of two comprehensive, doctoral-level universities; four administratively merged, four-year institutions; and five merged colleges of technology. All units are bound together for the common purpose of serving the citizens of Montana. The system includes research universities, specialty institutions, and smaller colleges closely attuned to regional needs. The Board of Regents is committed to providing reasonable access without unnecessary duplication of programs. The institutions that comprise the Montana University System are diverse, shaped by different histories, and designed to meet different needs. **This uniqueness is recognized and encouraged.**

While the institutions are unique, they function as part of an integrated whole seeking to achieve maximum cooperation and interdependency as directed by the Board of Regents. This cooperation and interdependency are marked by:

- shared intellectual and material resources;
- collaboration among units in teaching, research, and public service;
- participation in a common academic core curriculum;
- guaranteed acceptance of credits from other institutions in the system;
- use of a common academic calendar;
- mutual efforts to ensure orderly educational changes in response to shifts in society;
- effective applications of distance-learning and telecommunications-based management systems; and
- recognition of the uniqueness and importance of all campuses to the unified system.

Units of the Montana University System have the common and fundamental purpose of developing the intellectual potential and aesthetic awareness of all students, including the skills of inquiry, reasoning, and expression. Through a variety of two-year and four-year professional programs, the system seeks to impart essential competencies that students will require for successful careers both now and in the future.

1. ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE OF THE MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

The governance and control of the Montana University System are vested exclusively in the Board of Regents of Higher Education, which has full power, responsibility, and authority to supervise, coordinate, manage, and control the Montana

University System. In addition, the Board of Regents exercises programmatic oversight of Montana's three community colleges. The Board of Regents establishes system-wide policy and appoints, by constitutional mandate, a Commissioner of Higher Education as the chief executive officer of the Montana University System. The Commissioner of Higher Education is charged by the Board of Regents with coordination of a truly unified higher education system and has the responsibility and the delegated authority necessary to ensure the integrity of the defined missions and financial resources of all affiliated institutions, including the merged Colleges of Technology (formerly the Vo-Techs). The specific duties of the Commissioner are specified in Section 204.3 of the *Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education Policy and Procedures Manual*.

a. Four-Year Institutions

The two comprehensive, doctoral-level universities of the Montana University System are The University of Montana and Montana State University. Four, four-year institutions are administratively merged with the two universities.

— Affiliated units with The University of Montana are:
- Montana Tech of The University of Montana; and
- Western Montana College of The University of Montana.

— Affiliated units with Montana State University are:
- Montana State University, Northern; and
- Montana State University, Billings.

As defined by Board policy, the relationship among the affiliates and the universities is one of administrative merger:

> Administrative merger in higher education means the sharing of a president and other administrative personnel between two institutions. The integrity of both merged institutions' purposes and support functions is maintained (Section 277, *Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education Policy and Procedures Manual*).

The chief executive officers of Montana State University and The University of Montana are appointed by the Board of Regents and are designated as presidents. The Commissioner of Higher Education supervises and directs the presidents with regard to the execution, administration, interpretation, and implementation of Board policy. Each president shall be directly responsible and accountable to the Commissioner of Higher Education and, through the Commissioner, to the Board of Regents for the direction, management, and control of his/her unit and all affiliated units. The duties

of the presidents are specified in Section 205.2 of the *Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education Policy and Procedures Manual.*

The chief executive officers of administratively-merged, four-year units are selected respectively by the presidents of Montana State University and The University of Montana. At a minimum, search and screening committees in the selection process shall include representatives of faculty, students, alumni, non-academic staff and administrative staff of the administratively-merged campus. The chief executive officers are appointed by the Board of Regents and are designated as chancellors. The presidents supervise and direct the chancellors with regard to the execution, administration, interpretation, and implementation of Board policy. Each chancellor is directly responsible and accountable to his/her respective president and, through the president, to the Commissioner and the Board of Regents for the management of his/her unit.

The chancellor is the chief administrative officer of the campus and is responsible for administering all campus programs. The chancellor provides the leadership and coordination for all campus activities, including academic, fiscal and student affairs. As appropriate, the chancellor engages in foundation activities. Where applicable, the chancellor is the chief campus representative of the administration with respect to the collective bargaining contract for the unit.

The chancellor may function as the chief academic officer of the campus; the role of chief academic officer is encouraged as part of the chancellor's responsibilities. Since each campus of the Montana University System is unique, the precise definition of the chancellor's duties as chief academic officer varies from unit to unit.

b. Colleges of Technology

The Board recognizes and reaffirms the critical role of two-year education in Montana. The Colleges of Technology (formerly the Vocational-Technical Centers) are an integral part of Montana higher education. The primary role of each college is to provide vocational and technical competencies and life skills to individuals preparing to enter, advance, or change their careers. Students at the Colleges of Technology acquire technological competencies or upgrade competencies through a curriculum validated on a regular basis by business and industry. Instruction and community service are designed to meet present and emerging occupational needs of the local community, state, region, and nation.

The Board intends that the Colleges of Technology retain as whole the special characteristics attached to each of the present vocational-technical centers. Specifically, the critical role of providing technical education to the communities in

which they are located is to be continued and developed to meet future workforce demands. The Commissioner of Higher Education is directed to place particular emphasis on the concerns that have been expressed about mission drift, funding inequities, responsiveness to business and industry, and the unique role that the technical centers have played in Montana higher education.

As appropriate to meet community needs, the further development of two-year, transfer education may be pursued within the guidelines of Regents' policy. The Board intends that greater emphasis be given to the important role of two-year education in Montana to meet the expected future demand for educational services.

Each College of Technology is affiliated with one of the two universities:

— Affiliated with The University of Montana are:
- The College of Technology—Missoula;
- The College of Technology—Butte; and
- The College of Technology—Helena.

— Affiliated with Montana State University are:
- The College of Technology—Billings; and
- The College of Technology—Great Falls.

Where the Colleges of Technology are co-located with four-year units, they are merged with the respective campuses (Butte, Missoula and Billings).

As defined by Board policy, the relationship between a College of Technology and the affiliated unit is one of merger:

> Merger is the fusion or absorption of one institution into another with the result that the merged institution ceases to have an independent existence. A merged institution may retain, at the discretion of the Regents, certain elements of the unique role and mission which characterized it prior to merger (Section 277, *Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education Policy and Procedures Manual*).

Colleges of Technology are headed by a dean who reports to the chief academic officer of the institution with which the college is merged. The Dean of the College of Technology is expected to perform the same functions typically performed by deans of other schools and colleges within higher education institutions.

c. Higher Education Centers—Helena and Great Falls

Higher education centers are not new to Montana. Provision for such centers is found in Section 220, *Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education Policy and Procedures Manual*. Centers have been established in Montana "to maximize the availability of educational opportunities for the state's citizens in a manner which will enhance quality while minimizing unnecessary duplication of effort and potentially harmful competition." In accordance with the provisions of Board policy, Montana University System Higher Education Centers are located in Great Falls and Helena. Board guidance specifies that "the Commissioner of Higher Education shall establish policies to provide for necessary coordination, equitable distribution of student credit hours generated, allocation of fee revenues and any other matters" (Section 220). Montana University System programs and courses that are offered in these two cities are administered through the respective higher education centers.

To ensure coordination, steering committees are established at each location. The membership of each committee consists of The University of Montana President or designated representatives; the Montana State University President or designated representatives; depending on location, the Carroll College President in Helena or The College of Great Falls President in Great Falls or designated representatives; and the Commissioner of Higher Education or designated representatives. The membership of these committees may be modified by the Commissioner should circumstances warrant; however, the Board's intent is to maximize coordination of educational services in these communities to include a good working relationship with the respective private institutions.

2. MISSION, ROLE, AND SCOPE

a. Vocational-Technical Curriculum

The Board recognizes the special nature of vocational-technical curriculum in the Montana University System. Curriculum development is often in response to business and community needs. Lead times to establish programs and courses can be short. Since the curriculum review process in higher education can be lengthy, the Board directs that particular sensitivity be given to the unique curricular needs and responsiveness that have been the hallmarks of vocational-technical education.

b. Undergraduate Curriculum

Within the context of the new organizational structure for the Montana

University System, primary responsibility for the development, oversight, and assessment of undergraduate curriculum is the responsibility of the faculty at the respective four-year institution. In recognition of the unique characteristics of each institution's curriculum, the Regents intend that the special qualities of each institution be preserved. Further, the Regents charge the Commissioner of Higher Education with specific oversight responsibility to ensure that mission drift not be nurtured at either the four-year institutions or the Colleges of Technology. Montana Tech of The University of Montana; Western Montana College of The University of Montana; Montana State University, Billings; and Montana State University, Northern will grant their own undergraduate degrees.

Within the context of preserving the unique qualities of individual institutions, the need remains for greater integration of programs, attention to issues of duplication, and better transferability. Within the spheres of the two merged universities, every effort is to be made to address these academic issues. These concerns are to be of highest priority for the university provosts and Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs.

c. Graduate Curriculum

The Montana University System strives to achieve a relationship among all faculty that promotes cooperation in the best collegial tradition. This relationship is particularly important among graduate faculty within the structural umbrella of the two universities. Expertise and resources must be shared within the system.

Regardless of the campus, responsibility for graduate programs unique to a particular institution rests with that unit. For instance, an engineering program that is found exclusively in Montana Tech of The University of Montana is the responsibility of the faculty on that campus.

Programs shared among two or more campuses correspondingly share responsibility for curriculum development. For instance, both Montana State University, Bozeman, and Montana State University, Billings, offer education programs. The responsibility for curriculum is shared among the faculty at these two locations. Sharing must recognize the particular expertise that exists on system campuses. In the present example, the quality of the special education program at Montana State University, Billings is a case in point.

Each university and its administratively merged units have a graduate council with a membership comprised of representatives from all appropriate campuses. Whether a graduate program is unique to one institution or shared among institutions, the council is charged with review and recommendation to the graduate dean of each

university. The Board of Regents intends that the function of graduate dean be assigned to the provosts at Montana State University and The University of Montana. Graduate diplomas in the Montana University System bear the name of the institution with which the student studies; the intent is to recognize the special role of faculty-student relationships in the graduate education process.

Emphasis is placed on sharing degrees and resources within the Montana University System. The Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs works closely with the two university provosts in coordinating graduate curriculum and minimizing unwarranted duplication.

d. Role and Scope Review

In response to the changes previously outlined and to clarify procedures for proposed programmatic offerings in the future, all role and scope statements will be reviewed and recommendations prepared as part of the ongoing planning process that follows adoption of these organizational changes by the Board of Regents.

3. FACULTY GOVERNANCE

Each campus in the Montana University System has a unique culture and special needs. Faculty governance, to include recommendations on appointment, promotion, and tenure, is the responsibility of the individual campus. Specific procedures for faculty who have appointments to more than one unit will be reviewed within the context of the new Montana University System structure.

4. FUNDRAISING, GRANTS, AND CONTRACTS

Foundations are integral parts of individual campuses. The people who work to further the goals of these foundations are doing so because they have established a relationship with the institution and the people who are part of that campus. To complicate or dilute this relationship in any way is counter to the best interests of the unit and the Montana University System.

The Board of Regents strongly endorses the continued independence of campus foundations. All externally generated funds secured by an individual unit remain with that unit. Resources from grants and contracts secured through the efforts of individual campuses are to be used at the respective campus in support of the projects for which they were designated. Cooperation among campuses is encouraged; when awards are

made as part of a joint effort, the resources are to be distributed as specified in the application process.

5. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IN THE MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

On the administratively merged campuses, budget and resource allocation decisions are managed by each chancellor in consultation with the respective university president and the Commissioner. The chancellor provides campus leadership and coordination for fiscal affairs.

Increasingly, the Montana University System is becoming more dependent on tuition revenue as a funding source for higher education. This trend is expected to continue. As the focus on enrollment management intensifies, the ability to direct students to institutions that best match the individual's needs and abilities will be enhanced by the restructured system.

The funding floor for all units of the Montana University System is tied to student enrollment. This funding mechanism guarantees a base level of funding for each unit of the system. The integrity of this process that ties funding to students, both in-state and out-of-state, is of paramount importance to the Regents. In addition, the Board is committed to a funding mechanism that targets Montana public funds exclusively for Montana students.

Financial management oversight, to include budget preparation, is a shared responsibility of the Commissioner and the two university presidents subject to the governance and control of the Board of Regents.

6. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Collective bargaining negotiations and agreements continue in the context that has been established.

7. ACCREDITATION

The Montana University System must maintain accreditation by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges (NWASC), Commission on Colleges. Immediately upon adoption of these structural changes, the Commissioner will comply with the NWASC's criteria to maintain accreditation standards. The same process of notification and compliance will be followed for specific program accreditation.

8. IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE

At the January 1994 meeting of the Board of Regents, the Regents will receive recommendations to restructure the Montana University System and be asked to vote on the following motion: "The recommendations contained herein are adopted by the Board of Regents, and the Commissioner of Higher Education is directed to implement the recommendations according to the timetable outlined below."

The goal is to implement the principal recommendations contained in this document on July 1, 1994, thus putting into place the infrastructure for the necessary detail work that must follow. By March 24, 1994, the Commissioner will recommend to the Regents for their approval the specific activities that will be implemented on July 1, 1994, and those that will be implemented not later than July 1, 1995. If legislative concurrence is to be sought for any of these changes, they will be presented to the 54th Legislature in 1995. The Board views the current changes as a beginning. The Commissioner is directed to begin a comprehensive planning process that identifies goals and objectives for the year 2000 and beyond. The Board expects regular updates on the progress of these planning efforts.